WEIRD VAMPIRE TALES

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SHARP FANGS SNAP SHUT AS SCREAMS RIP THE NIGHT IN

IT CRIED FOR BLOOD

PLUS

the RIVER IS RED

THE EERIE AND WEIRD IN

THE SKIN-RIPPERS
DEADMAN'S DANCE
OPEN GRAVE

April 1979

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WEIRD VAMPIRE TALES

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VAMPIRE

FLY, UGLY WINGED CREATURE, AND SCARE GILDA! SHE SWORE IF SHE SAW ANOTHER BAT IN THIS OLD PLACE, SHE'D QUIT! LET'S SEE IF SHE MEANT IT!

MUST WE GO OVER THESE LINES AGAIN? MY NERVES ARE SHOT!

FREQUENTLY, IN THE WORLD OF THE THEATRE, GROTESQUE REAL-LIFE DRAMA GOES ON BEHIND THE WINGS! IT WAS THAT WAY AT THE OLD MILL SUMMER THEATRE, WHERE AN UNDERSTUDY, NAMED INEZ FANE PLOTTED TO GET RID OF THE STAR, GILDA GILLETTE, SO THAT SHE, INEZ, COULD PROVE HER ART BEFORE AN OPENING NIGHT AUDIENCE OF CRITICS!

WELL, INEZ FANE, THIS LOOKS LIKE YOUR BIG CHANCE TO TAKE OVER THE STARRING ROLE, TONIGHT!
THANK YOU, SIR! I'M PREPARED!
T-THE BAT, I'LL THROW IT OUTSIDE FOR YOU, JACK! I'M NOT AFRAID OF IT!
THANKS, MISS FANE! I CAN'T IMAGINE WHERE IT CAME FROM! I KNOW THERE WASN'T A BAT LEFT IN THIS THEATRE THIS MORNING!
MY HOROSCOPE FORETOLD THAT THIS WOULD BE MY LUCKY DAY! I OUGHT TO KEEP THE BAT AS A GOOD LUCK TALISMAN!
I'LL HAVE THE BAT STUFFED AND MOUNTED AND KEEP IT IN MY DRESSING ROOM, WITH MY OTHER GOOD LUCK CHARMS!
SOON...
AN UNUSUAL SPECIMEN! WHERE DID THIS BAT COME FROM, MISS FANE?
WHY, I-I-- WELL, ONE OF THE MEN IN THE THEATRE KILLED IT! WHY?
THIS IS A VAMRIRE BAT, USUALLY FOUND ONLY IN SOUTH AMERICA! LOOK, THOSE SHARP TEETH, USED TO PUNCTURE THE VEINS OF ITS VICTIM AND DRAW OUT THE BLOOD!
UGGGHH! I'VE CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT HAVING THE HORRID CREATURE STUFFED!
AS YOU WISH! MAYBE THERE'S SOME TRUTH IN THE LEGEND THAT ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, THE MILL OWNER'S WIFE WAS EXECUTED FOR SUPPOSEDLY BEING A HUMAN VAMPIRE!

SHE WAS BURIED IN THAT CEMETERY RIGHT NEAR THE THEATRE!
WHY, THAT'S WHERE I CAUGHT THAT BAT!
LOOK OUT! THE BAT'S COME ALIVE!

LOOK OUT! IT'S GOING FOR YOUR THROAT!
IT'S TAKING MY LUCKY CHARM NECKLACE!

IT GOT AWAY! I'LL BUY YOU ANOTHER NECKLACE, IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME, MISS PANE!
THAT'S SWEET OF YOU, BUT THAT NECKLACE WAS A VERY LUCKY ONE! I'LL GET IT BACK SOME WAY!

AFTER SHE LEFT THE TAXIDERMIST'S SHOP...
I CAN'T CHANCE HAVING BAD LUCK IN TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE! I MUST GET THAT NECKLACE BACK! I FOUND THAT BAT IN THAT OLD BROKEN-DOWN MAUSOLEUM! PERHAPS IT RETURNED HERE!

I MUSTN'T THINK ABOUT THAT RIDICULOUS LOCAL LEGEND THAT THE WOMAN BURIED HERE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A VAMPIRE!

I WAS RIGHT! THE BAT DID RETURN TO ITS HOME! WOW, IF I CAN JUST GET THAT NECKLACE FROM AROUND ITS NECK!

AS INEZ REACHES FOR THE NECKLACE, A SWIFT TRANSFORMATION CAME OVER THE BAT...
A-A HUMAN VAMPIRE! EEEEY!!!EEE!
YES, MY DEAR! I AM OLGA MAZUR, THE MILL OWNER'S WIFE! BUT DON'T BE AFRAID! I WON'T HARM YOU!

YOUR SOFT, WHITE THROAT IS A GREAT TEMPTATION! BUT I MUST CONTROL MY NEED FOR YOUR BLOOD!
NO! NO! LEAVE ME ALONE, KEEP THE NECKLACE! I DON'T WANT IT!
WHEN YOU PREVENTED THE STAGE HAND FROM DESTROYING ME, YOU SAVED MY LIFE! ACCORDING TO THE VAMPIRE LEGEND YOUR VISIT HERE TRANSFORMED ME INTO A HUMAN VAMPIRE!
I STOLE YOUR NECKLACE TO MAKE SURE YOU WOULD COME HERE!
WH-WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME NOW?
IN ORDER TO RETAIN THIS HUMAN VAMPIRE FORM, I MUST MAKE YOU ONE OF US!
OH, NO! DON'T TOUCH ME! OOOOHH!
LATER...
I-I MUST'VE FAINTED! AND HAD SOME WILD DREAM ABOUT A VAMPIRE!
MY WRIST HURTS! OOOH! PERHAPS IT WASN'T A DREAM! TWO PUNCTURES OVER MY MAIN ARTERY! MAYBE THERE WAS SUCH A CREATURE, AND IT BIT ME, TO MAKE ME LIKE HER, AS SHE SAID!
NO! I JUST FEEL UPSET! THERE WAS A BAT! IT DID BITE MY WRIST WHEN I TRIED TO GET MY NECKLACE, AND I FAINTED! THAT ALL!

LATER, AT THE THEATRE, JUST BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE...
MISS FANE, HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS? ED FOREMAN WAS FOUND MURDERED A LITTLE WHILE AGO! THEY SAY HE WAS THE VICTIM OF A VAMPIRE!
NO! NO! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
THERE WERE TEETH MARKS AT HIS THROAT, AND EVERY LAST DROP OF BLOOD WAS DRAINED FROM THE YOUTH'S BODY!
IF YOU'D HEARD THE TALE OF THE VAMPIRE WIFE OF THE MAN WHO USED TO OWN THIS OLD MILL, YOU'D BELIEVE! ESPECIALLY SINCE A GROUP OF ANGRY TOWNSMEN WENT TO HER GRAVE, AND FOUND IT EMPTY, AND HER REMAINS WERE GONE!
INEZ FANE TRIED TO TELL HERSELF THERE WAS SOME OTHER EXPLANATION TO THE KILLING! BUT, LATER, DURING THE OPENING NIGHT PERFORMANCE!
BUT, AUBREY, I CANNOT MARRY YOU! I...
IT'S OLGA MAZUR, THE VAMPIRE! SHE'S RIGHT THERE IN THE AUDIENCE!
HER EYES! THEY SEEM TO TRANSFIX ME! I NO LONGER FEEL NERVOUS! I FEEL FILLED WITH A... A GREAT DRAMATIC POWER THAT I'VE NEVER FELT BEFORE!
INEZ FANE'S PERFORMANCE WAS SO FIERY, INSPIRED, THAT AS THE CURTAIN DESCENDED, THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE SHOOK THE THEATRE!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
BRAVO!
MISS FANE, I HAD TO BE THE FIRST TO GET TO YOU! I'M GREGORY VOSS, OF HALCYON FILMS! I HAVE A MOVIE CONTRACT YOU CAN'T RESIST!
COME IN, MR. VOSS! I-I'M SO EXCITED, I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE ANY OF THIS IS HAPPENING!

LATER...
A MOVIE CONTRACT, SIGNED AND SEALED! I'LL BE RICH, FAMOUS!
SUDDENLY...
INEZ, YOU WERE INDEED, SUPERB! WE HAVE A GREAT FUTURE AHEAD OF US! BUT NOW IT IS TIME FOR OTHER THINGS!
YOU! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!
YOU SEE, WE VAMPIRES, ONCE WE'VE CLAIMED A VICTIM AND SATED OUR MAD CRAVINGS RETURN TO HUMAN FORM, FOR A WHILE! BUT WHEN THAT INHUMAN THRUST RETURNS AGAIN, WE...
YOU'RE CHANGING RIGHT NOW!
YOU FORGET, INEZ, THAT I MADE YOU ONE OF US! YOU TOO, NOW HAVE THE TAINTED BLOOD COURSING THROUGH YOUR VEINS! SEE! EVEN NOW, YOU ARE ALSO CHANGING!
YES! AND I FEEL WEIRD, UNFAMILIAR URGES PULSING THROUGH ME!
THEN, LIKE A PAIR OF HELLISH NIGHT BIRDS, THEY SOUGHT OUT VICTIMS!
THERE! BELOW! ONE FOR EACH OF US!
YES! LET US HURRY! I AM GOING MAD WITH THIRST!
WHAT-- AARRRGGH!
DRINK DEEPLY, SISTER INEZ!
A LITTLE LATER, THEIR BLOOD-LUST SATED, BOTH WOMEN RETURNED TO HUMAN FORM, AND...
NOW THAT I'M NORMAL AGAIN, I CAN'T STAND THE THOUGHT OF WHAT I'VE DONE! IF I CAN ESCAPE HER, PERHAPS IT WILL NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN!
HA! HA! THERE IS NO ESCAPE FOR YOU NOW!

FOR THE NEXT WEEK, INEZ FANE SAW NOTHING OF HER VAMPIRE PARTNER! THEN, AFTER ARRIVING IN HOLLYWOOD...
YOU! I-- I THOUGHT I WAS FREE!
IT IS TIME AGAIN! YOU ARE ABOUT READY TO SOAR FORTH WITH ME ONCE AGAIN!
IT IS TRUE! I-I CAN FEEL THE CHANGE COMING OVER ME! AND NOW I'M GLAD! THIS TIME, MY BLACK-WINGED PARTNER, I WILL LEAD THE WAY IN A SEARCH FOR NEW VICTIMS!
THEN, MOMENTS LATER...
I TOLD YOU I HEARD SCREAMS FROM THIS PARK! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
FLEE, INEZ! IT WILL BE SAFER TO LOOK FOR OTHER VICTIMS!
THOSE CURSED BULLETS! MY WINGS ARE PIERCED, TORN! MY FLYING POWER IS WEAKENED
FLY OVER THE CROWDS AT THAT PREMIERE! THE POLICE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE MOB!
BUT, SUDDENLY...
HER WINGS WERE TORN BADLY! SHE'S BEEN BLINDED BY THE BLAZING LIGHTS! SHE SWOOPED RIGHT INTO ONE OF THEM!
AAAIIYEEE! WITH OLGA'S DEATH, I'M CHANGING BACK TO HUMAN FORM, IN MIDAIR! I'M FALLING...
AND SO, INEZ FANE, WHO SOLD HER SOLE TO BECOME A GREAT STAR, PLAYED A FINAL SENSATIONAL ROLE UNDER BLINDING LIGHTS AND GRINDING NEWS CAMERAS, BEFORE A HUSHED HORRIFIED AUDIENCE OF THOUSANDS!
The End

LIKE BLOOD THE RIVER IS RED

THERE IS A RUSSIAN PROVERB THAT SAYS: HISTORY FLOWS FORWARD ON RIVERS OF BLOOD... I, IVAN PETROFF, SECURITY OFFICER, STATIONED IN HUNGARY, KNOW WELL THE TRUTH OF THAT PROVERB...

AT 11:08 A.M ON THE 13TH OF APRIL, 1953, I AND COLONEL BERODITCH FIRST ENTERED THE TOWN OF MAROS IN NORTHERN HUNGARY...

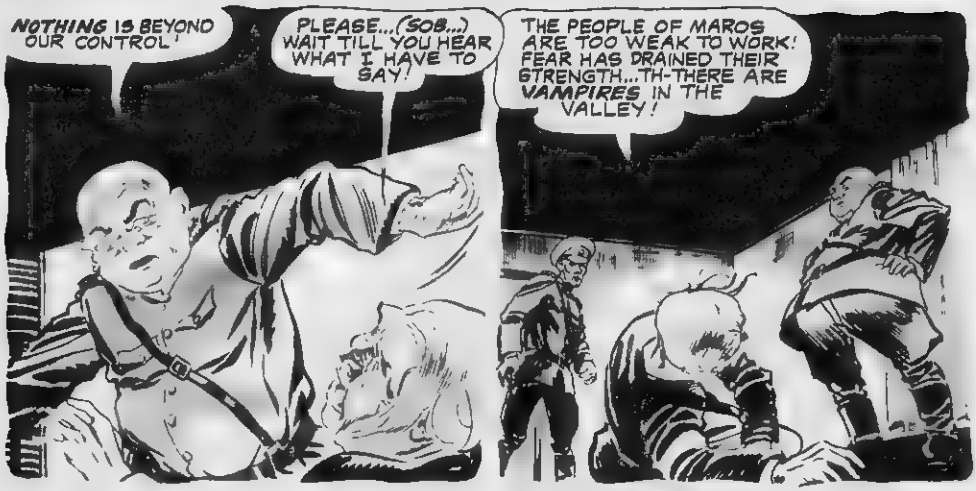
I ASSUME OUR MISSION HERE IS THE USUAL ONE, COMRADE COLONEL?

DA! THE NATIVES HERE HAVE NOT BEEN MEETING THE WORK QUOTAS SET FOR THEM IN MOSCOW!

IN EVERY TOWN THERE ARE INFORMERS...

OUT WITH IT, DOG! TELL US THE TRUTH! WHO IS SABOTAGING THE WORK PROGRAM?

Y-YOU MUST BELIEVE ME! W-WHAT HAS HAPPENED, IS BEYOND OUR CONTROL...



WHILE THE BUTT OF MY PISTOL PAID THE INFORMER FOR TRYING TO PALM OFF BOURGEOIS SUPERSTITIONS ON US, THE COLONEL PUT A CALL THRU TO BUDAPEST!

SHORTLY, THE REQUEST WAS FULFILLED AND...

IT CAME SWOOPING DOWN AT ME FROM THE SHADOWS...
...STINKING OF DRIED BLOOD AND DEATH!
I FLUNG UP MY HAND... I CLOSED MY EYES... BUT I COULD STILL HEAR THE WHIRRING...
...THEN THE WHIRRING OF THE LEATHERY WINGS STOPPED...
WH-WHO ARE YOU?
THIS IS MY DAUGHTER, LIEUTENANT! HER NAME IS LISE!
TH-THE BAT...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BAT?
BAT...? WE DO NOT HAVE ANY BATS IN OUR HOUSE, DO WE, FATHER?
MY NERVES WERE SHAKEN! I WENT TO BED SHORTLY AFTERWARD, BUT WITH SLEEP CAME A HORRIBLE DREAM...
I FORCED MY EYES OPEN! I DRESSED AS FAST AS I COULD AND RAN OUT OF THE HOUSE!
ALL THOSE LIES ABOUT VAMPIRES... I MUST WASH THEM OUT OF MY MIND! AH--I SEE THE BATTALION COMMANDER HAS POSTED THE SENTRIES AS I INSTRUCTED!
BUT THEN...
I-I MUST BE DREAMING AGAIN!

AT LAST I FORCED MYSELF TO MOVE...
I WASN'T DREAMING...THERE ARE VAMPIRES IN MAROS!
LATER...
WELL, LT. PETROFF, DO YOU HAVE ANY THEORIES ABOUT THE MURDER OF OUR SENTRY?
TO TELL WHAT I SAW WOULD BE TO SIGN MY OWN DEATH WARRANT! THE PARTY LINE IS THAT THERE ARE NO SUCH THINGS AS VAMPIRES...
NOW I WAS RETURNING TO MY BILLET...
I MUST SETTLE THIS MATTER MYSELF! I MUST LIQUIDATE ALL THE VAMPIRES PERSONALLY!
OLD MAN, WHERE IS YOUR DAUGHTER?
AFTER YOU WENT TO SLEEP, SIR... SHE LEFT FOR BUDAPEST! SHE WILL BE BACK IN A WEEK!
I MUST HANDLE THIS CAREFULLY! THE OLD MAN APPEARS STRONG-WILLED...THE GIRL WILL BE EASIER TO HANDLE!
THE SECOND SHE RETURNS, OLD MAN... NOTIFY ME!
SO THEN I WAITED, FOR FIVE SLOW-MOVING DAYS I WAITED FOR LISE TO RETURN FROM BUDAPEST...
BUT ON THE SIXTH NIGHT... ANOTHER OF OUR SENTRIES WAS KILLED!
AAAAAGH!

THE BATTALION COMMANDER WAS IN PANIC! WITHOUT CONSULTING ME, HE REPORTED DIRECTLY TO MOSCOW! THE NEXT MORNING, AN N.K.D. MAN FLEW IN...

WHERE IS THE SECURITY OFFICER ASSIGNED TO YOU BY BERODITCH?

MALENSKI!

OH, IT'S YOU! QUICK, HANDSOME ONE, GIVE ME A COMPLETE REPORT ON YOUR COURSE OF ACTION IN THIS CASE...

MALENSKI AND I HAD BEEN FOUNDLINGS IN THE SAME MOSCOW ORPHANAGE! WE HAD ALWAYS HATED EACH OTHER! IF MALENSKI EVER FOUND OUT I HAD BEEN CONCEALING INFORMATION, HE WOULD TAKE PLEASURE IN SHOOTING ME HIMSELF!

HAVE YOU NO TONGUE, PETROFF? SPEAK!

AFTER I HAD STAMMERED MY REPORT...

LIEUTENANT, YOU TOLD ME TO NOTIFY YOU THE SECOND LISE RETURNED...

GOOD... CLEAR OUT THE HOUSE! I'LL QUESTION HER ALONE!

WITHIN BRIEF MINUTES...

IF YOU DON'T TELL ME HOW TO ROUND UP ALL THE VAMPIRES SO THAT I CAN LIQUIDATE THEM, THIS SPIKE WILL ENTER YOUR HEART!

NO... PLEASE... PUT THE SPIKE DOWN! I'LL TELL YOU... (SOB)... WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW! TONIGHT... AFTER DUSK... IN THE CEMETERY... THE VAMPIRES WILL MEET...

IT WAS AFTER DUSK NOW! LISE WAS BOUND SECURELY ON HER BED... AND I, ARMED WITH THE SPIKE WAS CREEPING STEALTHILY TOWARD THE CEMETERY...

JUST THEN...

AN AMBUSH!

FOOL... WE WERE HIDING OUTSIDE THE WINDOW WHILE YOU WERE QUESTIONING LISE!

W-WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME?

THEY ANSWERED BY CLOSING IN! I SWUNG BLINDLY, TRYING TO BREAK THRU! A SET OF FANGS RAKED MY FOREARM!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

MALENSKI!

LOOK... A FAT ONE BURSTING WITH BLOOD! LET'S GET HIM!

IVAN... HELP ME!

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN... MALENSKI WAS TOO CLEVER TO BE THROWN OFF THE TRACK! HE HAD FOUND OUT ABOUT THE VAMPIRES' MEETING PLACES...

I'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT YOU AGAIN, MALENSKI...

SO MUCH BLOOD... (GASP)... MORE THAN WE HAVE EVER DRUNK BEFORE...

HERE'S MY CHANCE!

THEY WERE TOO BLOATED TO MOVE!
FOR THIS I WILL GET THE ORDER OF THE RED STAR...
NOW TO KILL LISE... THE LAST OF THE VAMPIRES!
I WAS STANDING OVER HER, WHEN A NEARBY CLOCK CHIMED MIDNIGHT!
AND I GASPED WITH HORROR AS I SAW THE BACKS OF MY HANDS GROW SCALY... FELT MY TEETH LENGTHEN AND SHARPEN INTO LOATHSOME FANGS...
YES! AT THE CEMETERY YOU WERE BITTEN... RIGHT? YOUR TAINTED BLOOD HAS BEEN WAITING FOR MIDNIGHT TO EFFECT THE CHANGE! NOW, YOU AND I ARE THE ONLY VAMPIRES IN ALL OF HUNGARY
MONTHS HAVE PASSED! THE NATIVES TAKE HEART AS ONE AFTER ANOTHER, THE RED SOLDIERS DIE! WHAT ELSE CAN MOSCOW DO BUT KEEP SENDING IN FULL-BLOODED REPLACEMENTS...?
YES... I, IVAN PETROFF, KNOW WELL, THE TRUTH OF THE PROVERB; HISTORY FLOWS FORWARD ON RIVERS OF BLOOD!
The End

DREAMS OF WEALTH AND SUCCESS TURN INTO A FIENDISH BLOODY NIGHTMARE FOR NIGHT CLUB OWNER, PHIL HART WHEN HE MEETS THE ...

EVIL CAT

I HATE THOSE FUZZY CLAWED CREATURES! ...IT'S LIKE SINKING YOUR TEETH INTO A PORCUPINE! -BUT THIS STORY IS A SHOCKING-SCREAMER! READ IT!

BOY, AM I THIRSTY...BUT THAT FUZZ...YEECH!

ANOTHER NIGHT IN THIS DUMP! I DIDN'T MAKE ENOUGH FOR THE LIGHTS! I'M LICKED! MY LAST CENT WENT INTO THIS DEAL!

THE NEXT MORNING....

YEAH---THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE COUNTRY THAT...***HEY! COME BACK HERE!***

I OUGHT TO HAVE MY HEAD EXAMINED WORRYING ABOUT A CAT! A CRAZY AN.MAL--JUMPING OUT OF THE CAR THAT WAY! HERE, ***PUSS, PUSS, PUSS....***

NO USE LOOKING FOR THE CAT! MAYBE SHE'S GOOD RIDDANCE!

HUH??

SAAY! YOU'RE GATA, THE DANCER! HOW IN THE WORLD DID ***YOU*** GET HERE? AH--ER--I'M PHIL HART!

I SAW YOUR CAT RUNNING INTO THE WOODS! I'M AFRAID SHE WON'T COME BACK!

I FREQUENTLY WANDER OFF BY MYSELF! IF YOU'RE GOING BACK TOWARD THE CITY, MR. HART....I'D PREFER RIDING IN YOUR CAR THAN IN THE BUS!

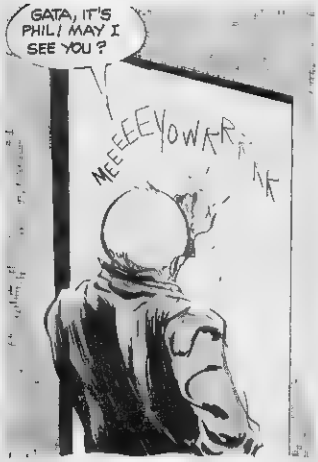
WHY..WHY SURE! YEAH---IT'S A PLEASURE!

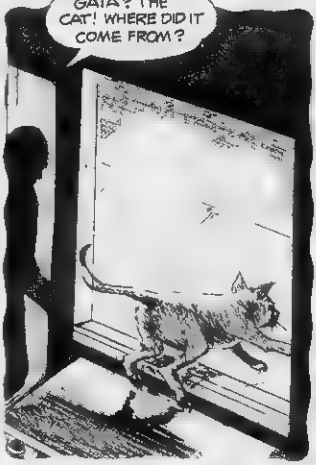
ON THE WAY BACK TO THE CITY...

I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK I'M FORWARD, GATA....BUT, I OWN A NIGHT CLUB! IT'S GOING ON THE ROCKS BECAUSE I CAN'T AFFORD GOOD TALENT! WOULD YOU CONSENT TO DANCE THERE FOR A WHILE FOR A PERCENTAGE OF THE TAKE?

OF COURSE, I WILL, MR. HART! YOU'RE DOING ME A FAVOR! THE PERCENTAGE WON'T BE NECESSARY! LET'S SAY I'M HELPING A FRIEND OUT!

WEEKS LATER, GATA'S SENSATIONAL DANCING IS A TREMENDOUS DRAWING CARD, THE CLUB IS PACKED EVERY NIGHT...





REMEMBER, PHIL.... I LOVE YOU!
GATA...YOU...YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...I HAVE TO TELL YOU SOMETHING...

THERE'S NOTHING TO TELL, PHIL! I HAVE DECIDED! GOOD NIGHT!
GATA, LISTEN....
OH WHAT A MESS! HOW AM I GOING TO TELL HER ABOUT WENDY?

LATER, PHIL CALLS ON WENDY BLAKE, HIS FIANCEE....
...AND THAT'S THE STORY, HONEY! BELIEVE ME...I'VE GIVEN HER NO ENCOURAGEMENT!
I SEE, PHIL.... THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO... YOU'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF HER!

I HATE TO DO IT, DARLING, BUT IT'LL GET UNPLEASANT IF I DON'T END IT RIGHT NOW!
OF COURSE, IN THREE WEEKS WE'LL BE MARRIED...THEN, WHEN I KNOW YOU'RE ALL MINE I WON'T BE JEALOUS OF GATA!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE JEALOUS OF ANYONE! IT'S ALWAYS BEEN YOU, WENDY!
I KNOW, PHIL... I KNOW ..

THE NEXT DAY....AFTER THE LAST SHOW...
PHIL! WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY DRESSING ROOM? EVERYONE ELSE HAS GONE HOME! YOU SHOULD BE WITH WENDY!
SO YOU KNOW ABOUT HER!
I KNOW MANY THINGS! SHE'LL NEVER HAVE YOU, PHIL, NEVER! I TOLD YOU THAT I LOVE YOU!
I DON'T LOVE YOU! I'M MARRYING WENDY IN THREE WEEKS!
SO! THAT'S HOW YOU SHOW YOUR GRATITUDE AFTER I MADE YOU A SUCCESS! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I GIVE YOU UP TO ANYONE ELSE!
MOUTHING A SAVAGE GROWL, GATA SPRINGS AT PHIL, WHO LASHES OUT TO PROTECT HIMSELF!
KILL! KILL! I... UHHHHHHHHH..
GATA! DON'T!
WITH A DULL TERRIFYING THUD, GADA'S HEAD HITS A CORNER OF THE DRESSER AS SHE FALLS BACKWARD...
THUD
THE GIRL MOANS, TWITCHES, THEN LIES STILL AS THE DEATH RATTLE DIES IN HER THROAT....
THERE'S NO HEARTBEAT...SHE'S... SHE'S DEAD! I MUST GET HER OUT OF HERE---TELL THEM SHE LEFT....
LATER, PHIL DISPOSES OF THE BODY....
THE CURRENT IS SWIFT HERE! SHE'LL BE CARRIED OUT TO SEA IN A FEW HOURS!

THE NEXT DAY...

WHAT A MESS ..THEY RE REPAIRING THE BASEMENT STAIRS! YOU'VE NEVER HEARD SUCH A RACKET ALL DAY! PHIL, DID YOU TALK TO GATA!

YES, WENDY! SHE'S GONE!

MEEOWWRRR...

WHAT'S THAT?

ONLY A CAT! SHE STRAYED IN THIS MORNING AND I FED HER!

IT'S THE SAME CAT! I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!

PHIL! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

TAKE HER AWAY FROM ME!

MEOWWR!

MUST GET AWAY! GATA! STOP TORTURING ME! LET ME ALONE! I DIDN'T MEAN TO KILL YOU!

NO, PHIL! NOT THE BASEMENT! THE STAIRS ARE OUT!

YEE

THE SHARP DROP BREAKS PHIL'S NECK... AND AS HE LIES SPRAWLED IN DEATH, THE SPECTRAL FIGURE OF GATA APPEARS....

I WARNED YOU, PHIL! I TOLD YOU NO ONE BUT I WOULD HAVE YOU! NOW WE ARE TOGETHER--- IN DEATH!

ONLY WENDY'S HORRIFIED SCREAM BREAKS THE PALL OF SILENCE AND THE WILD SHRIEK DOES NOT RUFFLE THE CAT CALMLY LICKING ITS FUR....

The End

HE SAW IT PLAINLY: THAT MACABRE SIGHT THAT GRISLY HOLE IN THE GROUND! IT WAS A MIXUP IN TIME THAT MADE A SPINE-CHILLING SIGHT...

THE OPEN GRAVE

WHOSE GRAVE? WHY, **YOU** OUGHT TO KNOW! IT'S **YOUR GRAVE!!**

IMAGINE MY ROTTEN LUCK! .. THERE ARE HUMANS WHO DIE BEFORE I FIND THEM ...SUCH IS THIS VEIN BUSTER..IT'S WEIRD! GO...READ ON---

IT WAS JUST AN ORDINARY FALL DAY AND MEL DUNN WAS JUST AN ORDINARY FELLOW OUT FOR AN ORDINARY DAY'S HUNTING IN THE WOODS...

WELL...LET'S SEE HOW THE HUNTING IS OVER THERE!

MEL DUNN BEGAN CLIMBING THE FENCE-GATE, BUT HIS HUNTING CLOTHES WERE CUMBERSOME AND SUDDENLY, HE FOUND HIMSELF FALLING--

NOW, I'LL -- HEY-- **WHOA...**

HE FELL HARD, THERE WAS A BRIEF FLASH OF PAIN IN HIS HEAD -- BUT HE SAT UP AND FELT NO BROKEN BONES, NO SPRAINED MUSCLES...

WOW -- WHAT A TUMBLE!

HE CONTINUED THE HUNT, WALKING OVER THE ROLLING HILLS, AND THEN...

ONE THING ABOUT THE COUNTRY -- EVEN THE GRAVEYARDS ARE ATTRACTIVE!

SOME VAGUE CURIOSITY PROMPTED MEL TO DETOUR THROUGH THE CEMETERY, AND AS HE DREW CLOSE HE SAW A LITTLE MAN DIGGING -- A GRAVE...

HI -- HELLO, M'FRIEND! HOW'S -- GASP -- THAT GRAVE! THAT TOMBSTONE! I -- I...

EH ? WHY -- WHAT'S THE MATTER, MISTER ?

THAT TOMBSTONE -- IT HAS ***MY NAME ON IT!*** "MEL DUNN -- BORN MAY 10, 1930 --- DIED NOV. 20, 1971!" BUT -- ***THIS IS NOV. 17!!***

ABRUPTLY THE DAY'S PEACE WAS SHATTERED, AND MEL DUNN FOUND HIMSELF GRABBING THE GRAVE-DIGGER...

WHAT KIND OF JOKE IS THIS, OLD MAN ? ***WHO'S BEHIND THIS ?***

LEMME GO! I ONLY DO WHAT I'M TOLD! YOU GOT QUESTIONS, MISTER, GO UP TO THE CARETAKER'S HOUSE -- ON THE HILL!

EH -- HE'S LOONEY! ***HIS*** GRAVE, HE SAYS! EH -- POOR FELLA -- CRAZY, PLUMB CRAZY!!

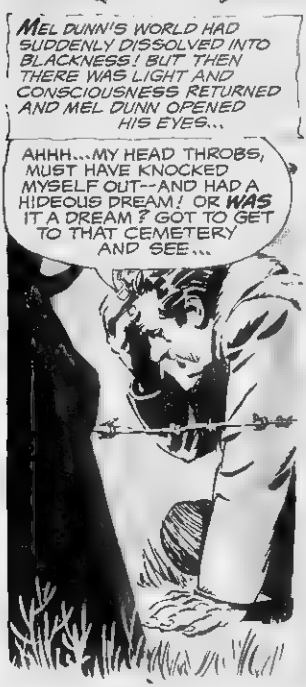
MEL DUNN RACED TO THE CARETAKER'S HOUSE, AND --

CALM YOURSELF! THIS DUNN FELLOW WAS ***DROWNED*** FOUR DAYS AGO AND IS TO BE BURIED THIS AFTERNOON! YOU WERE A CLOSE FRIEND OF THE DECEASED ?

A CLOSE FRIEND? ME!

HA-HA-HA-HA--YOU MIGHT SAY THAT!... HA-HA-HA...YEAH... A REAL CLOSE FRIEND--THAT'S ME!... HA-HA-HA--(GASP)...
MY DEAR SIR--ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT? HADN'T YOU BEST SIT DOWN?

HERE--LOOK OUT! YOU'RE FALLING!


MEL DUNN'S WORLD HAD SUDDENLY DISSOLVED INTO BLACKNESS! BUT THEN THERE WAS LIGHT AND CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNED AND MEL DUNN OPENED HIS EYES...
AHHH...MY HEAD THROBS, MUST HAVE KNOCKED MYSELF OUT--AND HAD A HIDEOUS DREAM! OR WAS IT A DREAM? GOT TO GET TO THAT CEMETERY AND SEE...

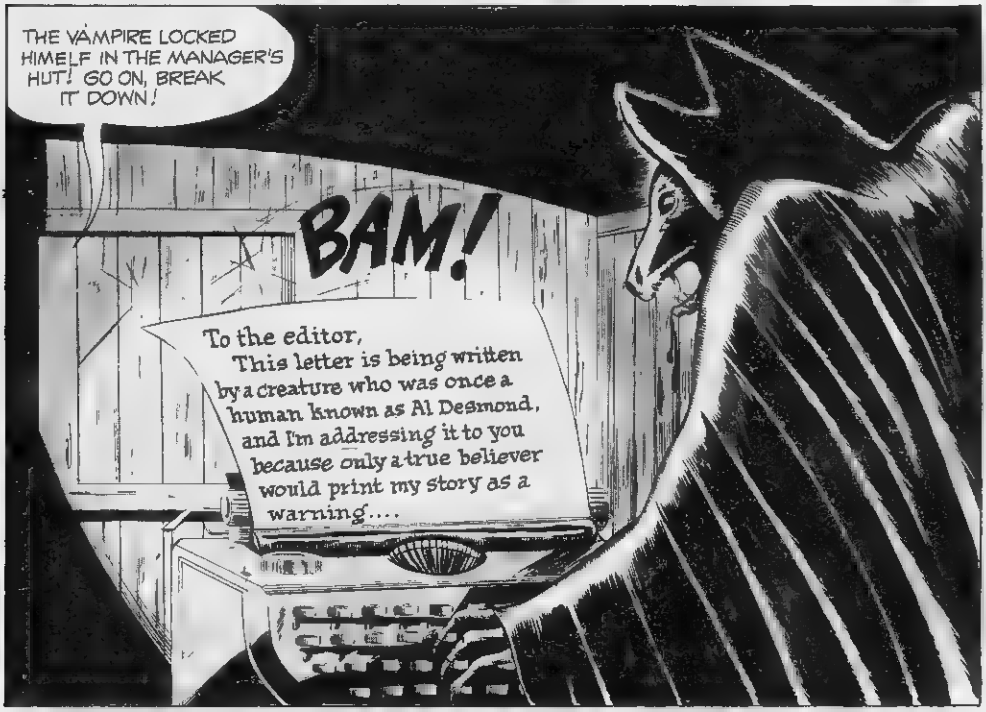
NO--HERE'S WHERE HE WAS DIGGING! BUT THERE IS NO GRAVE! SO IT WAS ONLY A DREAM--A HIDEOUS DREAM!

BUT--WAIT! HOW COULD I HAVE DREAMT ABOUT SOMETHING I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE? DID I SOMEHOW SLIP AHEAD IN TIME--AND LEARN OF MY OWN DEATH?

IT WAS A VERY SCARED, VERY CONFUSED HUNTER WHO RETURNED TO HIS CAR AND SAT THERE QUIETLY FOR A MOMENT BEFORE DRIVING HOME...
SO-- I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT WAS A DREAM--OR A WEIRD SCRAMBLE OF TIME ITSELF! BUT I CAN TAKE IT AS A WARNING
MAYBE I'M LUCKY--MAYBE BY AVOIDING THIS DEATH I'LL LIVE FOREVER! HA-HA-- THE MAN WHO OUTWITTED FATE! NO WATER FOR ME TODAY! HA-HA-HA-HA...
OH-OH! OCEANSIDE CLIFF COMING UP, I'LL PUT THE BRAKES ON ALL THE WAY FOR THIS ONE! I-- THE BRAKES! THE BRAKES! THEY'RE NOT WORKING!!
I CAN'T STOP!! IT'S OUT OF CONTROL! I--I WON'T MAKE THE CURVE!
YAAAAA! THE DREAM WAS TRUE! "DROWNED"! YAAAAAA!
The End

IT CRIED for BLOOD

LITTLE DID AL DESMOND KNOW HE WOULD BE IN A TERRIFYING WEB OF MYSTERY WHEN HE TOOK HIS FIANCÉE ON AN OUTING TO A TRAVELING CIRCUS THAT HAD COME TO TOWN! BUT THE HORRIBLE FATE THAT OVERTOOK HIM MIGHT OVERTAKE ANYONE---UNLESS AL DESMOND'S STRANGE STORY IS HEEDED!



REALLY, AL.... YOU'RE BEHAVING BADLY!
PALMISTRY IS NONSENSE ONLY TO FOOLS--AND I CAN SEE THAT YOU ARE NO FOOL. MAY I EXAMINE YOUR HAND?
SURE!

OHHHH!
HEY, WHAT'S WRONG?

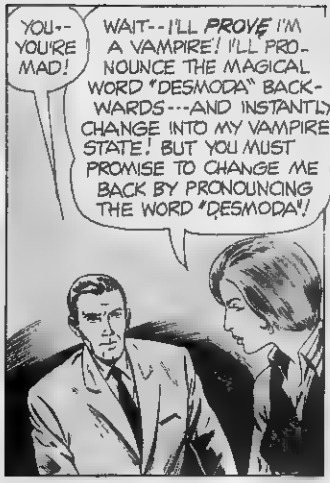
TELL ME... IS YOUR NAME, DESMOND?
WHY, YES-- BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW?

YOU WILL LEARN THE ANSWER AND A LOT MORE...IF YOU COME TO MY TENT AT MIDNIGHT.
I....I'LL BE HERE... ...AT MIDNIGHT!

I FORBID YOU TO VISIT THAT...THAT WITCH TONIGHT, AL!
I INTEND TO FIND OUT WHAT ELSE SHE HAS TO TELL ME-- AND NOTHING YOU CAN SAY WILL CHANGE MY MIND, LOUISE!

AS MIDNIGHT STRUCK, I MADE MY WAY TO DESMODA'S TENT....
I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR SOMEONE LIKE YOU FOR A LONG TIME---AND AT LAST I HAVE FOUND SOMEONE OF MY OWN KIND!
YOUR OWN KIND? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I AM A VAMPIRE---OF THE SPECIES DESMODA! MOST PEOPLE WHOSE NAMES ARE SIMILAR TO DESMODA HAVE A HISTORY OF VAMPIRISM IN THEIR FAMILIES!


YOU--YOU'RE MAD!
WAIT--I'LL PROVE I'M A VAMPIRE! I'LL PRONOUNCE THE MAGICAL WORD "DESMODA" BACKWARDS---AND INSTANTLY CHANGE INTO MY VAMPIRE STATE! BUT YOU MUST PROMISE TO CHANGE ME BACK BY PRONOUNCING THE WORD "DESMODA"!

SHE'S REALLY OFF HER ROCKER!
ALL RIGHT, IF YOU CHANGE INTO A VAMPIRE, I'LL PRONOUNCE THE WORD, "DESMODA"!
GOOD! NOW WATCH.... ADOMSED!

GREAT SCOTT! SHE..SHE DID CHANGE INTO A VAMPIRE!

I....I'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE---FAST!

OWW!

IT....IT'S CORNERED ME! I'D BETTER CHANGE HER BACK INTO HER HUMAN FORM....DESMODA!

YOU--YOU WERE RIGHT.... YOU'RE A WOMAN AGAIN!

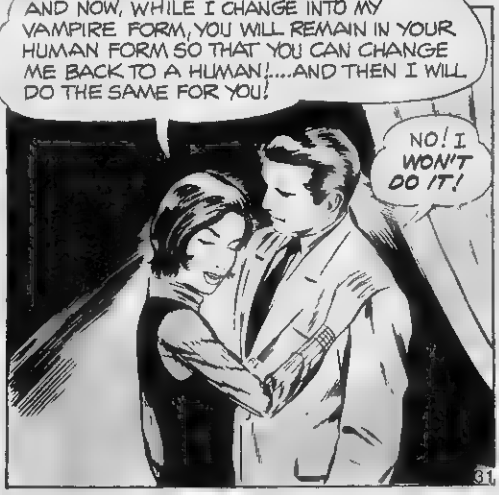
BELIEVE ME NOW?
Y-YES, I DO! BUT HOW DID YOU FIND THE SECRET OF TRANSFORMING YOURSELF INTO A VAMPIRE?

THE SECRET WAS PASSED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION! BUT WHEN MY LAST LIVING RELATIVE---DIED RECENTLY, I STARTED LOOKING FOR ANOTHER VAMPIRE! I HAD TO FIND ONE, BECAUSE WHEN I CHANGE INTO A VAMPIRE, I LOSE THE POWER OF HUMAN SPEECH....

THAT WAS WHY I HAD TO FIND SOMEONE WHO WOULD CHANGE ME BACK INTO MY HUMAN FORM AFTER MY VAMPIRISH ORGIES! AND I FOUND YOU!

ME? SURELY THE NAME OF DESMOND ISN'T ENOUGH PROOF!
THERE ARE OTHER SIGNS! FOUR FINGERS OF YOUR HAND HAVE ELONGATED BONES--- WHILE YOUR THUMB IS SMALL AND FREE! IT'S SIMILAR TO A BAT'S HAND!

MY HANDS ARE UNUSUAL.. ....BUT I NEVER THOUGHT THEY WERE THE HANDS OF A VAMPIRE!
YES, THOSE ARE THE HANDS I'VE BEEN HOPING TO SEE EVER SINCE I BECAME A PALMIST!


AND NOW, WHILE I CHANGE INTO MY VAMPIRE FORM, YOU WILL REMAIN IN YOUR HUMAN FORM SO THAT YOU CAN CHANGE ME BACK TO A HUMAN!....AND THEN I WILL DO THE SAME FOR YOU!
NO! I WON'T DO IT!

"IT DIDN'T MATTER WHETHER OR NOT I EVER ASSUMED HUMAN FORM AGAIN! ALL THAT MATTERED WAS THAT I HAD TO KILL....KILL... KILL!"

"I LEAPED ON HER, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE--FOR SHE HAD ALREADY CHANGED INTO A VAMPIRE! THEN BEGAN A BATTLE TO THE DEATH!"

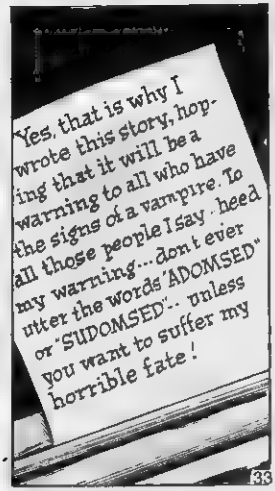
"....A BATTLE WHICH I WON, THANKS TO MY GREATER WEIGHT AND STRENGTH!"

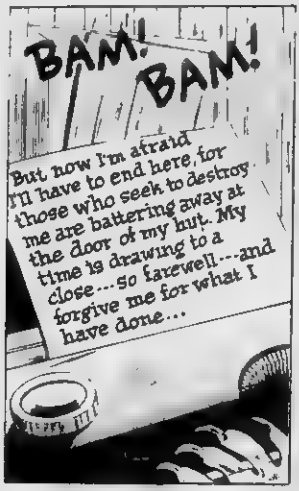
"BUT NOW THAT I HAD SLAIN MY FIRST VICTIM, MY APPETITE FOR BLOOD WAS WHETTED--AND UNABLE TO CONTROL MYSELF, I FLEW OFF IN SEARCH OF OTHER VICTIMS!"

"I WENT ON A RAMPAGE THROUGH THE CIRCUS GROUNDS..."

"THE SHRIEKS OF MY DYING VICTIMS AROUSED THE ENTIRE CIRCUS.. ...DESPERATELY I SOUGHT SANCTUARY....."
THERE HE GOES---INTO THE MANAGER'S HUT!

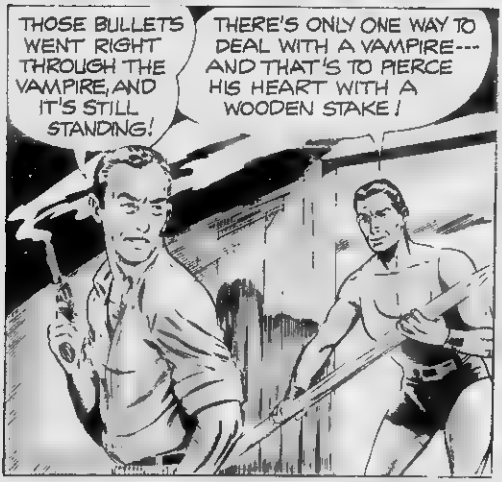
"I BARRED THE DOOR, KNOWING I COULD ONLY POSTPONE MY DOOM---AND MY ONLY CHANCE FOR ATONEMENT WAS TO WRITE A LETTER OF WARNING TO THE WORLD...."


Yes, that is why I wrote this story, hoping that it will be a warning to all who have the signs of a vampire. To all those people I say heed my warning... don't ever utter the words "ADOMSED" or "SUDOMSED".. unless you want to suffer my horrible fate!


BAM! BAM!
But now I'm afraid I'll have to end here, for those who seek to destroy me are battering away at the door of my hut. My time is drawing to a close...so farewell...and forgive me for what I have done...

CRASH

THERE'S THE VAMPIRE--- SHOOT IT DOWN!
BULLETS CAN'T HURT A VAMPIRE--BUT I'LL GET SOMETHING THAT WILL!


THOSE BULLETS WENT RIGHT THROUGH THE VAMPIRE, AND IT'S STILL STANDING!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DEAL WITH A VAMPIRE--- AND THAT'S TO PIERCE HIS HEART WITH A WOODEN STAKE!

AND THIS POINTED TENT POLE MAKES AN EXCELLENT STAKE!

THAT'S THE END OF THAT VAMPIRE! I GUESS WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT MADE HIM THE WAY HE WAS!
MAYBE WE WILL KNOW! HE SEEMS TO HAVE LEFT A LETTER IN MY TYPEWRITER!

HMMM, STRANGEST STORY I EVER READ! THERE'S NO TELLING WHETHER IT'S TRUE OR NOT, BUT THE LEAST I CAN DO IS SEND IT ON TO THE MAGAZINE IT WAS ADDRESSED TO... JUST IN CASE THE STORY IS TRUE!
The End

READ THIS MACABRE TALE RIPPED FROM THE DIARY OF A MODERN VAMPIRE!

DEADMAN'S DANCE

THEY SAID OF JOHN DRUNE, THE OWNER, HE ALWAYS PRESENTED STARTLINGLY DIFFERENT ENTERTAINMENT!

TO MORBID, HUNGRY NIGHT CLUB CROWDS THE DEVIL'S DEN OFFERED NEW SENSATIONS IN ENTERTAINMENT!

GOLD WAS JOHN DRUNE'S GOD AND--IT LURED HIM ALONG DARK AND SINISTER PATHS OF EVIL!
WHAT ? A HUNDRED DOLLARS TO FIREPROOF ONE DANCE DRESS ? I WON'T PAY IT!
WHY SHOULD I ? HELEN WON'T EVEN GET NEAR THE FLAMES! I'LL BE $100 AHEAD!
HERE'S THE DRESS, HELEN! ALL FIREPROOFED, BUT KEEP AWAY FROM THE FLAMES, IT'S DANGEROUS!
OF - COURSE, MR. DRUNE!
DUSK
THAT NIGHT...
LOOK AT THAT CROWD! AND NO MONEY WASTED ON NONSENSE LIKE FIREPROOFING A DANCE DRESS!
SUDDENLY, AT THE CLIMAX OF THE WEIRD CHILLING DANCE...
LOOK OUT! THE FLAME...
EEEEE!
HELEN!
THE FOOL! THAT DRESS COST $250!
IT WAS DON WAND WHO SPRANG TO SMOTHER THE FLAMES, BUT HER SHRIEKS OF ANGUISH HAD DIED AWAY!
SHE CAN'T LAST! THE FLAME WENT INTO HER LUNGS!
JOHN! JOHN... DRUNE...!

YOU... TRICKED ME... LIED! YOU... KILLED ME! BUT... I'LL HAVE... REVENGE! AHHHH!
MURDERER!

YOU LIED ABOUT FIREPROOFING HER DRESS! YOU KILLED HER BUT I'LL KILL YOU!

I'LL KILL YOU...
MR. DRUNE WASN'T TO BLAME! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! I SAW IT HAPPEN MYSELF!
TH-THANKS, OFFICER!

WHAT IF THIS DRIVES AWAY BUSINESS? A NASTY THING LIKE THIS COULD RUIN ME!

BUT JOHN DRUNE NEED NOT HAVE WORRIED ABOUT BUSINESS! NEXT NIGHT...
IS THIS WHERE THAT POOR GIRL WAS BURNED ALIVE? SHOW ME THE SPOT, DARLING! I LO-O-OVE CREEPY THINGS!
I SHOULD HAVE SAVED THAT DANCE DRESS! THEY'D BUY PIECES OF IT AS SOUVENIRS I'LL BET!

HOURS LATER, WHEN THE DEVIL'S DEN HAS CLOSED AND THE LAST HELP GONE FOR THE NIGHT!
AHH, THAT BEAUTIFUL, BEAUTIFUL MONEY! NOW I CAN SIT DOWN AND REALLY ENJOY MY GORGEOUS PROFITS!

LOOK AT THOSE LOVELY BILLS...
EEEAAHHH!

YIIII! PUT ME DOWN! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT KIND OF A TRICK IS THIS? HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?
TRICK?
SUDDENLY THERE WAS ANOTHER FIGURE IN THE ROOM!
EEEEAAA! MY MONEY! STOP!
BLOOD MONEY! IT CAME FROM FIRE... LET IT RETURN TO FIRE!
THE GRAVE STENCH WAS CHOKING, THE RELENTLESS GRIP OF SKELETON HANDS LIKE IRON! STILL JOHN DRUNE CLUNG TO A SHRED OF SANITY!
I GET IT! THIS IS AN ACT YOU WANT ME TO HIRE! OKAY, SEE ME TOMORROW! I SIGN A CONTRACT!
YOUR CONTRACT WITH ME WAS SIGNED THE DAY YOU WERE BORN, JOHN DRUNE!
ON YOUR FEET! WE HAVE COME TO SEE YOUR DANCE OF DEATH...
YOU'RE CRAZY! IT'S ALL SOME CRAZY NIGHTMARE!
SUDDENLY JOHN DRUNE WAS RIMMED BY A RING OF FIRE!
EEEAA! FIRE!
OF COURSE! WASN'T THAT YOUR MASTER-PIECE? THE DANCE OF DEATH IN A CIRCLE OF FIRE?
AND ANOTHER FIGURE WAS THERE BEFORE HIM... A FIGURE SO FRAUGHT WITH HORROR THAT HIS SENSES REELED!
NO! NO! Y-YOU'RE DEAD!
OF COURSE... AND YOU KILLED ME! AND NOW IT IS YOUR TURN TO DANCE WITH DEATH!
I WON'T! EEOWW!
IF YOU FIND YOUR PARTNER DISTASTEFUL ...REMEMBER, YOU MADE HER AS SHE IS!

THE ORCHESTRA STRUCK UP THE STRAINS OF THE DEAD MARCH! JOHN DRUNE WHIRLED THROUGH THE MACABRE DANCE!
NO! NO! NO!
LET ME GO! GET AWAY FROM ME!
DO I REVOLT YOU, JOHN? YOU HIRED ME! I WAS SO BEAUTIFUL!
HELEN FELT THE SAME WHEN YOU MADE HER DANCE WITH ME!
HOLD ME CLOSER, JOHN! YOU'LL FIND ME ATTRACTIVE AGAIN WHEN YOU HAVE BECOME LIKE ME!
AFTER AN ETERNITY, THE SOBBING STRAINS OF MUSIC DIED! FROM THE TABLES CAME THE CLATTER OF BONY HANDS APPLAUDING!
CONGRATULATIONS, JOHN DRUNE! THE CROWD LIKES YOUR DANCE!
IN TERROR, JOHN DRUNE THREW HIMSELF AT THE FEET OF THE HIDEOUS APPARITION!
NO! NO! DON'T MAKE ME GO THROUGH THAT ANY MORE! I'LL DO ANYTHING... PAY ANYTHING...
BUT...
WHY, HIS FEET AREN'T MOULDERING BONES! THEY'RE SOLID FLESH... ICY COLD BUT FIRM FLESH!
OKAY! I'M WISE TO YOU, NOW! YOU WERE CUTE, BUT NOT QUITE CUTE ENOUGH!
SO YOU FINALLY DISCOVERED MY IDENTITY!

JOHN DRUNE WAS STILL SCREAMING WITH THE LAUGHTER OF MADNESS WHEN THE POLICE BROKE INTO THE DEVIL'S DEN AT DAWN!

THE END

HELEN APPLETON WAS CONSTANTLY PEEVED BECAUSE HER HUSBAND WAS MORE A MOUSE THAN A MAN... BUT WHEN HE CHANGED SHE LIKED IT MUCH LESS...

THE MONSTER

THIS VAMPIRE TALE #1406 WAS FILED UNDER "HENPECKED HUSBANDS" SECTION... IT'S A SPINE CHILLING WEIRDO, THAT WILL SNAP YOUR VEINS!

CYRIL APPLETON KNEW JUST WHAT KIND OF HAT HE WANTED, BUT...

THERE YOU ARE, MR. APPLETON! JUST THE HAT FOR *YOU!*

IT'S AWFUL... NOT MY STYLE AT ALL!

YOU'LL SHOW EXCELLENT JUDGEMENT SELECTING IT! SHALL I SEND IT... OR WILL YOU TAKE IT WITH YOU?

I'LL... ER... WHY, I'LL TAKE IT WITH ME!

AND WHEN CYRIL GOT HOME TO HIS WIFE...
CYRIL! HOW CAN YOU WEAR A HAT LIKE THAT? DID THE SALESMAN TALK YOU INTO IT...
WHY, ER... HE WAS RATHER PERSUASIVE, DEAR!
I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A WEAK-WILLED, SPINELESS CREATURE AS YOU! YOU HAVEN'T THE GUMPTION TO SPEAK YOUR MIND! WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, ASK MR. FITCH FOR A RAISE TOMORROW!
I CAN'T, DEAR! HE... HE'S SO TOUCHY THAT...
WELL, SO AM I... AND I WON'T GIVE YOU A MOMENT'S PEACE UNTIL YOU ASK!
VERY WELL, DEAR! AND NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO SPEND SOME TIME... YOU KNOW... IN THE CELLAR!
CYRIL DABBLED IN CHEMISTRY... AND NOT ONLY IDLY, FOR HE WAS WORKING ON ONE SPECIAL EXPERIMENT...
IF I COULD ONLY FIND IT!... A CHEMICAL COMBINATION THAT WOULD STIMULATE THE ADRENAL GLANDS... ... INCREASE MAN'S COURAGE!
CYRIL WORKED PARTICULARLY LATE THAT NIGHT, AND...
THIS MAY BE IT! PRECIPITATION... JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR... MUST TRY IT ON THE RABBIT... AT ONCE!
AT THAT MOMENT...
CYRIL! IT'S LATE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I... I THINK I FOUND IT... A LIQUID THAT WILL GIVE ME COURAGE!
HMMMPH! YOU WON'T FIND COURAGE IN A BOTTLE... BUT MAYBE YOU WILL WORK A MIRACLE, AND BECOME A MAN AFTER ALL! I'M GOING UP TO READ A WHILE!

I'LL POUR A LITTLE... JUST A DROP ON THIS LETTUCE LEAF...

CYRIL FED THE LETTUCE LEAF TO THE RABBIT, AND...
THAT EXPRESSION ON ITS FACE... IT... IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A RABBIT ANYMORE... IT'S MORE LIKE SOME... SOME WILD JUNGLE BEAST!

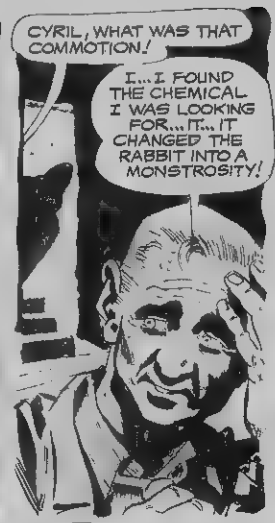
THE RABBIT CONTINUED TO CHANGE...
RRRRRR!

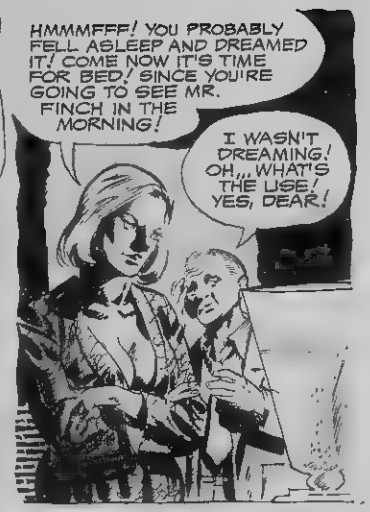
MORE AND MORE...
TRUNK!
CRAK!
SSSRAK!
GRRROOR!

AND THEN...
GRRRRRRR!

WHAT A FOOL I WAS TO TAMPER WITH NATURE! IT... IT'S GOING TO DEVOUR ME, ALIVE!

SUDDENLY...
THANK GOODNESS! IT...IT'S CHANGING BACK! LUCKY I USED ONLY A DROP OF THE STUFF!


CYRIL, WHAT WAS THAT COMMOTION!
I...I FOUND THE CHEMICAL I WAS LOOKING FOR...IT...IT CHANGED THE RABBIT INTO A MONSTROSITY!


HMMMFFF! YOU PROBABLY FELL ASLEEP AND DREAMED IT! COME NOW IT'S TIME FOR BED! SINCE YOU'RE GOING TO SEE MR. FINCH IN THE MORNING!
I WASN'T DREAMING! OH...WHAT'S THE USE! YES, DEAR!

CYRIL SLEPT VERY LITTLE THAT NIGHT...
I MUST DESTROY THAT BOTTLE TOMORROW... IT...IT'S NOT SAFE TO LET IT LIE AROUND!

NEXT DAY IN MR. FINCH'S, OFFICE...
MR. FINCH, I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT A...ER...CERTAIN MATTER...
WHY, APPLETON, I KNOW JUST WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND!

I BET YOU HEARD THAT WE'RE IN BAD STRAITS FINANCIALLY, AND YOU'RE VOLUNTEERING FOR A PAY CUT! A LOYAL EMPLOYEE IF THERE WAS ONE!
WHY... ER... YES, MR. FINCH! THAT'S ER... JUST WHAT I HAD IN MIND!

AND, WHEN CYRIL GOT HOME THAT NIGHT...
AND YOU LET HIM TALK YOU INTO A CUT INSTEAD OF A RAISE! OF ALL THE MEN IN THE WORLD, I HAD TO PICK A WEAK-MINDED JELLY FISH LIKE YOU! WHY DON'T YOU DRINK THAT STUFF THAT'LL MAKE A MAN OUT OF YOU!

NO! NO! YOU MUST BE JOKING! I FORGOT... BUT I HAVE TO GET RID OF IT... RIGHT NOW!
PLENTY OF TIME FOR THAT AFTER SUPPER, DEAR! JUST SIT DOWN AND RELAX!
MAYBE THERE IS SOMETHING IN IT, AFTER ALL! JUST LIKE HIM TO BREW A CONCOCTION THAT WOULD GIVE HIM COURAGE, AND THEN BE AFRAID TO DRINK IT! WELL, WE'LL SEE!
HELEN POURED HALF THE BOTTLE INTO CYRIL'S EGGNOG, AND...
THIS EGGNOG-- I DETECT A STRANGE FLAVOR!
JUST YOUR IMAGINATION, DEAR! DRINK IT DOWN! IT'S GOOD FOR YOU!
CYRIL DRANK IT TO THE LAST DROP, AND...
CYRIL! YOUR FACE!
CYRIL... DON'T COME NEAR ME!
RIIP!
RIIIIIP!
BIIP!
NO! NO! STAY THERE!
AAIIIIIIEEEEE!

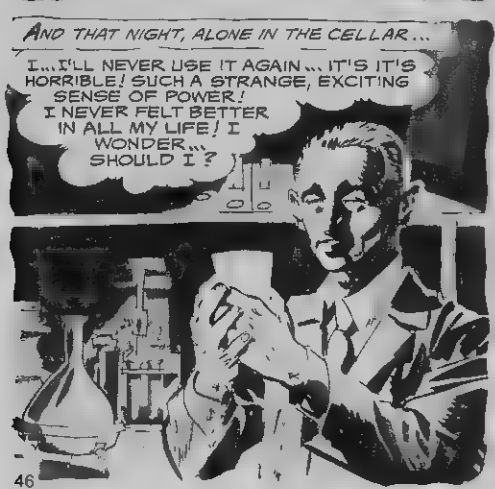
HELP! HELP!

I ALWAYS WANTED TO KILL YOU... AND NOW... YOU... YOU GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO DO IT!
AAAGGGHHH!

THOSE WOODS... MUST HIDE... TILL IT WEARS OFF!
EEEH! LOOK!
STOP... OR I'LL SHOOT!

CYRIL FOUND A SHELTERED CAVE, AND WHILE ARMED POLICE SOUGHT HIM...
DIDN'T SEE ME! MUST GO HOME... SOON AS I CHANGE BACK!

LATER THAT EVENING...
YOU'D BETTER COME DOWN AND IDENTIFY HER BODY! MR. APPLETON! YOU HAVE MY SYMPATHY!
POOR HELEN! SHE... SHE WAS SUCH AN UNDERSTANDING WIFE!


AND THAT NIGHT, ALONE IN THE CELLAR...
I... I'LL NEVER USE IT AGAIN... IT'S IT'S HORRIBLE! SUCH A STRANGE, EXCITING SENSE OF POWER! I NEVER FELT BETTER IN ALL MY LIFE! I WONDER... SHOULD I?

HE DID! AND DAYS LATER CYRIL WAS KILLED BY THE POLICE WHEN HE ATTACKED HIS NEIGHBOR, MRS. CORA ADAMS!
MARCHIONNE
The End

BLACK MAGIC IS **DARK AS NIGHT**... AND **BLOOD** IS BRIGHT AS **TERROR!** RED BLOOD AND SABLE **MURDER** BLENDED **HORRIBLY!**

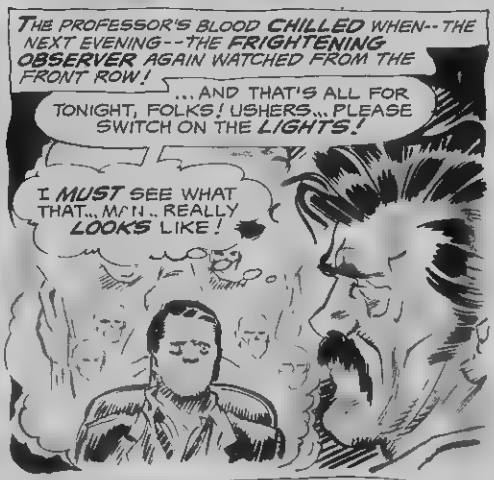
THE BLOOD CULT

THESE INGRATES ARE TAKING AWAY MY FAVORITE DRINK! YOU'LL SHIVER AND SHAKE WHEN YOU READ THIS ONE!

I'M GLAD TO BE HOME FINALLY... THAT WAS A TIRING PERFORMANCE! WHA-! AT THE WINDOW--THOSE EYES AGAIN! NO! NO! GO AWAY!

WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, DEAR! I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU SCREAM!
N-NOTHING, DEAR! JUST MY NERVES... AS YOU CAN SEE, THERE'S NOTHING HERE...

I WISH YOU'D STOP THIS HORRID BLACK MAGIC... YOU'VE BEEN SO STRANGE LATELY
NO! LET ME ALONE!
THE BOOK... SEEMS TO BE CALLING ME...


THE PROFESSOR'S BLOOD CHILLED WHEN--THE NEXT EVENING--THE FRIGHTENING OBSERVER AGAIN WATCHED FROM THE FRONT ROW!
...AND THAT'S ALL FOR TONIGHT, FOLKS! USHERS... PLEASE SWITCH ON THE LIGHTS!
I MUST SEE WHAT THAT... MAN.. REALLY LOOKS LIKE!

MISS CHANDLLR! LOOK! THAT SEAT IS EMPTY! THERE WAS NO ONE THERE!
WHY-WHY--I KNOW THAT, PROFESSOR MARVO... IT'S BEEN EMPTY FOR THE LAST FEW NIGHTS! WH-WHAT'S WRONG?

LATER...
I HAVE WAITED LONG FOR YOU... YOU WILL COME WITH ME NOW, MARVO!
I--I COULD HARDLY WALK TO THE DRESSING ROOM... THAT FACE! IF ONLY I... EH! WHA--WHAT! WH-WHO SAID THAT...!

I AM A MESSENGER FROM ..ANOTHER PLACE! THE CULT OF EVIL CALLS FOR YOU! YOU WILL COME WITH ME NOW...
YES... YES-SSS... I COME... I CAN'T SEEM TO HELP MYSELF... I AM COMING WITH YOU...

THE CULT MEETS TONIGHT, PROFESSOR! WE ARE ALMOST THERE... AND YOU ARE ALMOST ONE OF US! AH... JUST AHEAD... AND YOU WILL MEET LIVING EVIL!
I COME... I SEE THEM... THEY ARE... MY FRIENDS...

WELCOME, PROFESSOR MARVO... WE HAVE LONG WAITED TO CLAIM YOU AS ONE OF US! YOU WILL DANCE WITH US NOW IN OUR RITES OF DEATH!
I HEAR... O MASTER... I FEEL THAT I MUST BE... ONE OF YOU...

HEE! HEE! HEE! WE HAVE TRAPPED HIS SOUL! SOON WE WILL CLAIM HIS BODY! HE IS LOST... AS IS EVERY MORTAL WHO LOOKS TOO DEEPLY INTO THE SECRETS OF DARKNESS!

BEFORE YOU CAN JOIN US, MARVO... YOU MUST COMMIT THE FINAL ACT! YOU MUST SHED HUMAN BLOOD... AND THEN ALL OUR SECRETS WILL BE YOURS! GO NOW... BACK TO YOUR MORTAL HOME!

AS THE CREATURE OF MIDNIGHT SPOKE, MARVO WAS WHIRLED UP... UP THROUGH UNSPEAKABLE VISIONS...
GO NOW! GO NOW! GO-O-O!

THE NEXT NIGHT, HAD A VAMPIRE'S DESIRE FOR BLOOD! HE FELT STRANGE URGES... SURGING THROUGH HIM!
IT'S TIME, PROFESSOR MARVO! WE'RE DUE ON STAGE!
I MUST KILL... BLOOD... CAN'T GET RID OF THAT FEELING... ER... AH... I'M COMING, MISS CHANDLER! I'M READY!
...THE LAST ACT... IS TO SHOW YOU HOW... A GHOUL DRAWS BLOOD FROM HIS VICTIM!
THIS LOOKS A LITTLE TOO REAL IF YOU ASK ME!
OOOH... I CAN'T LOOK!
THAT GUY IS WEIRD HE REALLY ACTS LIKE A GHOUL!
PROFESSOR... TH-THAT ACT WASN'T IN THE S-SCRIPT! WH-WHAT'S THE M-MATTER WITH Y-YOU?
NOTHING... COME, MY DEAR... THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST SHOW YOU IN MY DRESSING ROOM!
WHAT DID YOU WANT TO SHOW ME, PROF-- AYEEE!! WHAT ARE Y-YOU DOING W-WITH TH-THAT KNIFE...!
I'M SORRY, MY DEAR... BUT I'M AFRAID I... MUST KILL YOU...
YOU-YOU'RE MAD! NO! DON'T COME NEAR ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!
KILL! BLOOD! BLOOD! HEE! HAAAHAA!
EEEEEE! I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE! EEEEEEE!
COME BACK! COME BACK!

OBESSED AND FRENZIED. MARVO WENT HOME, THIRSTING FOR BLOOD! HE KNEW HIS ASSISTANT WAS TOO TERRIFIED TO TELL ANYONE WHAT HAD HAPPENED...
PLEASE UNLOCK THE DOOR, DEAR... I KNOW SOMETHING'S WRONG!
GO AWAY! LET ME ALONE!
TOMORROW NIGHT, I WILL HYPNOTIZE A STAGEHAND AND BRING HIM TO MY DRESSING ROOM... HEH! HEH!

JUST AS I PLANNED LAST NIGHT! THE FOOL WAS EASY TO HYPNOTIZE! AND NOW... LOOK OUT! IDIOT! YOU'RE UPSETTING MY BOOKS!

SOME HEAVY TOMES ON THE BLACK ARTS FELL ON THE VICTIM'S HEAD... SNAPPING HIM OUT OF HIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE OF DEATH!
YOU FOOL! I'LL KILL YOU ANYWAY! ARRRGH!
WHERE AM I... WHA-- YAAAAAA! NO!

I-I MUST GET AWAY... GET THE POLICE! HELP! HELP! HE'S A MADMAN!
TH--THE POLICE! NO! STOP, YOU FOOL!

STOP! STOP!... ARRR! I'LL NEVER CATCH HIM NOW! I MUST GET HOME... HIDE!
HE-EE-ELP, POLICE!

PUFF... PUFF... YOU MUST HIDE ME FROM THE POLICE, MY DEAR... OR I'LL KILL YOU!
OH! WHY--WHY... YOU'RE JUST S-SICK... DEAR...

OPEN UP IN THERE! THIS IS THE POLICE! OPEN UP!
SICK AM I? EH? WHAT'S THAT! THE POLICE! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
THEY'LL NEVER GET ME! HEEEEYYAAGH! I MUST GET TO THE WOODS... FIND THE CULT... THEY'LL HELP ME!
COME AND FOLLOW ME, YOU FOOLS... IF YOU DARE! HEE! HEH!
STOP! STOP, MARVO! YOU CAN'T GET AWAY!
THEY'LL NEVER GET ME!! I'LL SEEK THE FIENDS OF HELL... TOGETHER, WE'LL BATHE THE WORLD IN BLOOD! BLOOD! BLOOD!
PUFF--PUFF-- I FEEL THE PRESENCE OF...UNSEEN THINGS! YES...YES! THEY ARE HERE! ALL AROUND ME...THOSE EYES!
DEATH BE PRAISED! YOU'VE FOUND ME... YOU MUST HELP ME! I AM ONE OF YOU! THE POLICE... THEY'RE AFTER ME!
YOU NEED FEAR ONLY THE BLACKNESS OF YOUR OWN SOUL! BUT YOU ARE NOT YET ONE OF US! YOU HAVE NOT YET SHED HUMAN BLOOD!

O, EVIL ONE... MASTER! MAKE ME ONE OF YOU... I NEED YOUR HELP!
YOU CANNOT COME TO US FOR HELP... YOU HAVE SPILLED NO BLOOD!

SO I HAVE SPILLED NO BLOOD, EH? THEN I'LL KILL ONE OF YOU! ARRGH! TAKE THAT! WH-WHAT!... YOU D-DON'T B-BLEED!
HA! HAA HAA! FOOL! DEAD THINGS DON'T BLEED!

BUT YOU, MARVO... YOU CAN BLEED!
NO! NO! DON'T YEEAARGH!

NOW... YOU HAVE FINALLY COMMITTED THE ACT THAT MAKES YOU OUR BROTHER! ARISE, UNHOLY PHANTOM OF MARVO! ARISE...

NOW YOU ARE ONE OF US... FOREVER, MARVO! JUST LIKE ALL OTHER KINDRED MEN OF EVIL! COME... BACK TO THE SHADOWLAND OF RESTLESS GRAVES!

YOU NEED RUN FROM THE POLICE NO LONGER, MARVO... THEY WILL NEVER GET YOU NOW...
THE END

JAVITT RODMAN HAD A MACABRE HOBBY... HE COLLECTED TOMBSTONES. BUT HE LITTLE SUSPECTED THAT ONE DAY HE HIMSELF MIGHT BE COLLECTED BY THAT GRIM, TERRIFYING COLLECTOR FROM BEYOND WHO HAUNTS THE FINAL RESTING PLACES OF MOULDERING BONES.

TOMBSTONE FOR A GHOUL

NO! NO! YOU CAN'T BURY ME YET! I'M NOT LIKE YOU VILE CREATURES--I'M STILL ALIVE!

ENTER THE CADAVER'S WEIRD WORLD WHERE ONLY THE BLOODLESS DWELL EXCEPT RODMAN... HM.M... ..NEED A DRINK!..

Krenaga

SOME PEOPLE ARE CONTENT TO HUNT FOR HUMOROUS EPITAPHS ON TOMBSTONES AND JOT THEM DOWN, BUT JAVITT RODMAN CARRIED THAT GRUESOME PASTIME ONE STEP FURTHER...

NO ONE'S AROUND THIS OLD, DESERTED CEMETERY AND THIS CARVED TOMBSTONE IS ONE OF THE MISSING ITEMS FROM MY COLLECTION-- I HAVE NO TOMBSTONE WITH AN INSCRIPTION ABOUT A WIFE MURDERER!

THERE! IT'S MINE! MAY THE KILLER'S CORPSE REST IN PEACE... BUT HIS GRAVESTONE RESTS IN MY HOUSE FROM NOW ON!

TANE FRUIT
BORN 2-4.

RETURNING TO HIS HOUSE, JAVITT RODMAN UNLOCKS HIS BACK ROOM AND GAZES AT HIS COLLECTION...

UNRIVALED! UNMATCHED! NO ONE CAN BOAST A ROOMFUL OF TOMBSTONES LIKE MINE!--AND WHAT PLEASANT READING FOR A STORMY NIGHT! BUT THE BEST PART OF MY HOBBY IS THAT THE DEAD *CAN'T* PROTEST!

A FEW DAYS LATER, AS RODMAN DRIVES DOWN A SEEMINGLY UNUSED BACK ROAD...

THAT'S STRANGE! WHAT AN ODD PLACE FOR SUCH A MAGNIFICENT MAUSOLEUM!

THERE'S A TOMBSTONE BY THE SIDE OF THE MAUSOLEUM AND IT LOOKS FROM HERE LIKE A PRIZE ITEM FOR MY COLLECTION!

RODMAN
JAVITT
RODMAN

HOW DID YOU KNOW MY NAME? WHO ARE YOU?

HOW I KNOW YOUR NAME OR WHAT I AM MATTERS NOT! BUT HEED MY WARNING--- ***NEVER ENTER HERE!***

BUT THE STRANGE WARNING ONLY SERVES TO EXCITE JAVITT RODMAN'S MORBID CURIOUSITY, AND THAT NIGHT, AS A PALE MOON SILVERS THE SILENT BURIAL TOMB...

THE CARETAKER'S GONE! NOW'S MY CHANCE TO READ THE INSCRIPTION ON THAT TABLET AND IF IT'S WORTHWHILE TO TAKE IT WITH ME!

IT'S M-MY NAME! MY BIRTHDATE! BUT ***WHOM*** DID I MEET HERE?

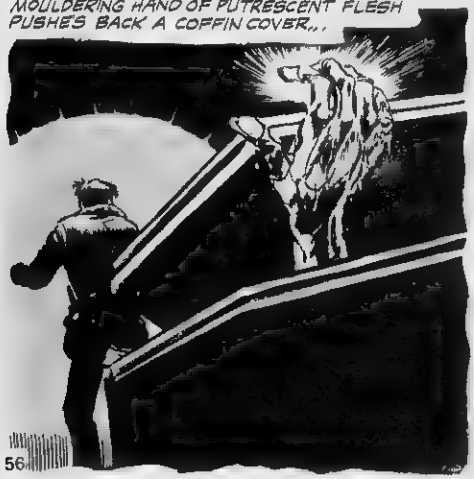
JAVITT
RODMAN
BORN
APRIL 2, 1[illegible]
[illegible]

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE THAT MY NAME SHOULD BE ON THAT TABLET... WHATEVER SECRET THERE IS TO THIS LURID PLACE MUST BE INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM! MAYBE I CAN BREAK THE LOCK!

WITH GRIM DETERMINATION, HE TWISTS THE METAL RAKE, AND SUDDENLY...
THERE! IT'S BROKEN. NOW TO SEE WHAT'S BEYOND THESE DOORS!

WITH A MENACING SCREECH, THE HEAVY MARBLE DOORS ARE PULLED OPEN, AND A DARK, SHADOWY FORM FLUTTERS BY...
A BAT! BUT I'M CERTAIN THAT'S THE ONLY LIVING THING IN THIS SILENT TOMB!

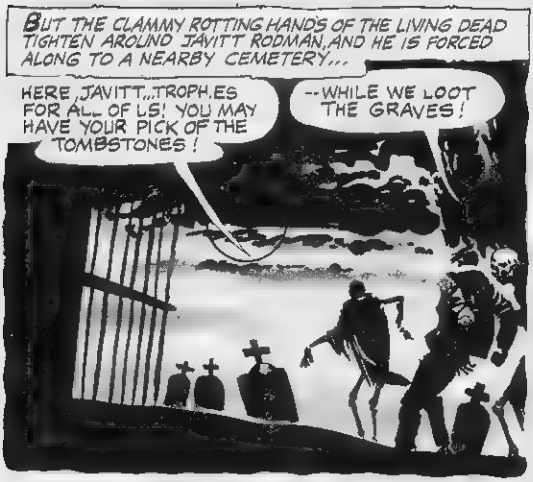
FIVE COFFINS, BUT ONE IS OPEN AND EMPTY!


And SUDDENLY, BEHIND THE INTRUDER, A GREEN, MOULDERING HAND OF PUTRESCENT FLESH PUSHES BACK A COFFIN COVER...

WELCOME, JAVITT RODMAN! WE HAVE LONG BEEN EXPECTING YOU!
YES, AFTER ALL, YOU ARE ONE OF US!

N-NO! YOU'RE DEAD! KEEP AWAY FROM ME! WE HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON! NOTHING!
BUT WE DO-- WE ARE ALL VIOLATERS OF GRAVES!

WE UNBURIED THE DEAD WHILE WE WERE THE LIVING AND STOLE WHAT WE WANTED! YOU HAVE ROBBED THE DEAD OF THEIR ONLY IDENTITY AFTER DEATH--THEIR TOMBSTONES!
NO! NO!
AND TONIGHT, YOU HAVE OPENED THE DOOR FOR US! THERE IS A GRAVEYARD NEAR-- COME! THERE IS GHOULISH WORK TO BE DONE!


BUT THE CLAMMY ROTTING HANDS OF THE LIVING DEAD TIGHTEN AROUND JAVITT RODMAN, AND HE IS FORCED ALONG TO A NEARBY CEMETERY...
HERE, JAVITT... TROPHIES FOR ALL OF US! YOU MAY HAVE YOUR PICK OF THE TOMBSTONES!
--WHILE WE LOOT THE GRAVES!

AND AS JAVITT RODMAN STARES IN HORROR, THE FANTASTIC CREATURES HE RELEASED, BEGIN THEIR SORDID WORK...
AH! THE LIVING ARE SENTIMENTAL FOOLS! THEY ALWAYS BURY THEIR DEAD WITH RINGS ON-- GOLDEN RINGS!

AND BY ANOTHER UNEARTHED COFFIN, A PAIR OF SNIPPING SCISSORS BEGIN THEIR LOATHFUL TASK...
HAIR... I ALWAYS GET A GOOD PRICE FROM THE WIGMAKERS FOR THESE STOLEN LOCKS!

AND WITH AN EERIE, CREAKING SOUND A THIRD COFFIN IS PRIED OPEN...
COSTLY WINDING SHEETS ALWAYS BROUGHT A HIGH SUM AND THE DEAD ARE NEVER COLD... WE KNOW! AND SO SHALL YOU!
NO! I'VE SEEN ENOUGH! I WON'T STAY WITH YOU!

BUT STRUGGLE IS USELESS, AND RODMAN IS DRAGGED BACK INTO THE MAUSOLEUM...

LET ME GO! LET ME GO!

COME BACK TO THE COFFIN WITH US! ONE IS EMPTY... WAITING FOR YOU! EACH NIGHT YOU CAN JOIN OUR GHOULISH RAIDS!

IN WILD DESPERATION, JANITT RODMAN TRIES TO FREE HIMSELF, BUT HE IS HELD IN A DEATH GRIP...

WHY STRUGGLE? YOU ARE LIKE US; JOIN US!

WHERE'S THE CARETAKER? IF HE'D ONLY COME...HE'D HELP ME NOW!

THE "CARETAKER" WOULD HELP HIM; FOOL! DON'T YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?

HE IS YOUR ENEMY AND OUR ENEMY; WE ALL HAVE VIOLATED HIS KINGDOM!

NO! STOP! I'M NOT DEAD LIKE YOU, I WANT TO LIVE!

THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM HERE! WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS! JOIN US. THIS COFFIN IS YOURS!

NO! IN THE NAME OF MERCY!--STOP!

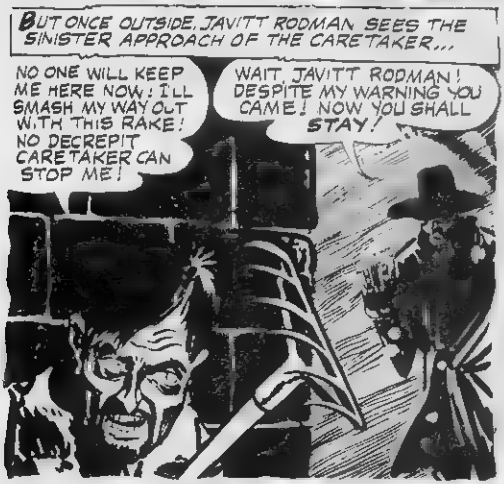
WE HAVE SHOWN NO MERCY TO THE DEAD! WHY SHOULD WE SHOW IT TO THE LIVING?

And AS THE TERRIFIED GRAVE-THIEF IS SHOVED DOWN INTO THE COLD, STONE COFFIN, THE HEAVY LID IS PRESSED RELENTLESSLY DOWN...

CAN'T PUSH IT OFF... THERE'LL BE NO AIR IN HERE--- I'LL SUFFOCATE!

BUT SUDDENLY, THE FIRST RAY OF DAWNING SUNLIGHT STREAKS INTO THE DANK MAUSOLEUM AND THE DECAYING CORPSES SINK INTO THEIR COFFINS...

JAVITT RODMAN PUSHES UP THE STONE LID! SUDDENLY, IT GIVES...
I'M FREE! THEY'RE GONE--BACK INTO THEIR COFFINS! THE NIGHTMARE HAS ENDED!


BUT ONCE OUTSIDE, JAVITT RODMAN SEES THE SINISTER APPROACH OF THE CARETAKER...
NO ONE WILL KEEP ME HERE NOW! I'LL SMASH MY WAY OUT WITH THIS RAKE! NO DECREPIT CARETAKER CAN STOP ME!
WAIT, JAVITT RODMAN! DESPITE MY WARNING YOU CAME! NOW YOU SHALL STAY!

WITH VICIOUS FORCE JAVITT SLASHES AGAIN AND AGAIN AT THE SHADOWY FIGURE..
I--I CAN'T HARM HIM!... THE RAKE GOES RIGHT THROUGH HIM.
CRACK!

And SUDDENLY THE CARETAKER'S HAND MAKES A SWEEPING MOTION, AS JAVITT RODMAN SINKS TO THE GROUND...
YOU HAVE VIOLATED MY REALM TOO MANY TIMES! THIS TOMBSTONE YOU SHALL NOT STEAL!

AND ON THE GRAVEN TABLET THE CARETAKER'S BONY HAND WRITES THE LAST WORD OF THE FINAL EPITAPH...
JAVIT
RODMA
BORN
APRIL 2, 1930
WHO MET HERE
DEATH
THE END

THE SKIN-RIPPERS

LOVE, THEY SAY, IS LIKE DYING A LITTLE! SO IF TWO LOVERS MUST DIE, WHAT BETTER WAY THAN TO DIE TOGETHER, HAND IN HAND? NOT IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS COULD THE TWO PEOPLE OF OUR STORY HAVE FORSEEN THE HORRORS THAT LAY IN WAIT FOR THEM IN A LONELY PLACE! THEY SHARED A NIGHTMARE IN WHICH CREATURES FROM HADES, COVERED WITH THE SLIME OF AGES, CRAWLED OVER THEIR SHRINKING BODIES AND, BIT BY BIT, TORE AWAY THE FLESH UNTIL THE BONES WERE PITILESSLY EXPOSED! IF YOU WANT TO SLEEP WELL TONIGHT—DON'T READ THIS SPINE FREEZING TALE ABOUT **NEW BONES FOR OLD...**

PAT AND LORNA FULLER, JUST MARRIED, AND VERY MUCH IN LOVE, TAKE A SEA VOYAGE ON THEIR HONEYMOON...

SUDDENLY, TO THE OMINOUS CRYING OF FOG HORNS, ANOTHER SHIP LOOMS OUT OF THE FOG! THERE IS A TERRIBLE CRASH!

SECONDS OF FRENZY AND PANIC ELAPSE, AND THEN..
KEEP SWIMMING, LORNA! I'VE GOT A RAFT! I'LL HAVE YOU IN A MINUTE!
OH! H-HURRY! W-WATER IS SO C-COLD! I-I CAN'T STAY UP MUCH LONGER!
THEY ARE OVERLOOKED BY RESCUE PARTIES IN THE FOG! AFTER A LONG NIGHT OF COLD AND FEAR, THE SUN FINALLY RISES...
LORNA! LOOK OVER THERE! AN ISLAND! WE'RE IN LUCK, HONEY! THERE MUST BE WATER ON IT, AND SOME KIND OF FOOD!
THANK GOOD-NESS! MAYBE A SHIP WILL PICK US UP SOON! WE CAN SEND UP A SMOKE SIGNAL!
CAREFUL OF THE SURF NOW! DON'T WANT TO BASH OUR HEADS IN ON A ROCK! HMM-SURE LOOKS DESERTED, DOESN'T IT?
Y-YES! BUT AT LEAST IT'S DRY LAND!
LATER, AS PAT GATHERS FIRE-WOOD...
LOOK AT THAT FUNNY LOOKING KIND OF SAND DUNES! ALL IN THE SAME SPOT, SORT OF LIKE A VILLAGE!
ARE YOU SURE THEY'RE DUNES, PAT, THEY LOOK SO REGULAR! ALMOST AS IF THEY HAD BEEN BUILT BY HAND! FOR SOME REASON THEY GIVE ME THE CREEPS!
A MOMENT LATER...
L-LOOK! THOSE STRANGE TRACKS IN THE SAND! CLAW-MARKS! I-I DON'T THINK I LIKE THIS ISLAND!
BUT WE'RE STUCK HERE! LET'S MAKE THE BEST OF IT!
HARDLY HAD THE MACABRE THOUGHT PASSED THROUGH PATS MIND WHEN HE HEARS LORNA SCREAM...
I WOULDN'T LET LORNA KNOW IT, BUT I'M AS JITTERY AS SHE IS ABOUT THIS PLACE! I FEEL AS THOUGH SOMETHING IS WATCHING US ALL THE TIME - SOMETHING HORRIBLE - WAITING!
EEEEEE PAT! HELP!
GREAT SCOTT! THAT'S LORNA IN TROUBLE!

AS HE REACHES THE BEACH, A FANTASTIC SIGHT GREETS HIM...
GOOD GRIEF! LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT CREATURE!
AAAAAAA HELP! THEY'RE AFTER ME! GIANT ANTS! H-HORRIBLE!
AS PAT FIGHTS THE HUGE ANT, IT EMITS A SHRILL SOUND..
YOU'RE A HORROR, BUSTER, BUT I THINK I CAN HANDLE YOU! I'LL SMASH THAT UGLY BODY OF YOURS TO PULP!
SQUERR!! --SQUERR!!
AND WHEN THE CREATURE IS DEAD THEY EXAMINE IT CAREFULLY...
IT'S A GIANT ANT, ALL RIGHT! TWO OR THREE OF THEM COULD KILL A MAN EASILY! AND BY THE WAY IT ATTACKED US, I'M AFRAID IT LIKED.. HUMAN FLESH!
DO YOU THINK THERE ARE MORE OF THEM?
SUDDENLY PAT GRABS HER ARM AND BEGINS TO RUN...
PAT! W-WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHAT'S THE MATTER? IT'S DEAD!
C'MON! I JUST HAD A HORRID THOUGHT! YOU KNOW THOSE DUNES WE SAW? SUPPOSE THE AREN'T DUNES... SUPPOSE THEY'RE ANT HILLS?
BUT IT IS ALREADY TOO LATE!
OH-OH! I WAS RIGHT! SEE THEM POURING OUT OF THOSE HILLS! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE NOW AND THEY WANT US!
UGH! SO M-MANY OF THEM! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? THEY'LL EAT US ALIVE!

I KNOW I'M AFRAID OF WHAT I'M THINKING, BABY! LOOK AT THEM NOW, SWINGING IN A CIRCLE TO SURROUND US! BRRR-REMEMBER STUDYING ANTS IN SCHOOL!
THEY CAN THINK! THEY'LL MAKE A CIRCLE AROUND US AND THEN CLOSE IN GRADUALLY!
SQUEEE-SQURRR-
PAT HAS AN IDEA..
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN KEEP THEM OFF WITH FIRE? M-MAYBE THEY AREN'T AFRAID OF IT!
WE'VE GOT TO GAMBLE! FIRE IS OUR ONLY CHANCE TO LIVE! HURRY AND GET MORE WOOD! WE'LL MAKE A CIRCLE OF OUR OWN!
SOON...
NOW WE'LL SEE! GOOD THING THAT I CARRY MATCHES IN A WATERPROOF CASE, OR WE WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE THIS CHANCE!
THEY'RE ALL AROUND US! C-CLOSING IN!
THEY CROUCH INSIDE THE RING OF SEARING FLAME..
LOOK, THE FIRE HAS STOPPED THEM! NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS KEEP IT GOING, MAKE IT LARGER!
NIGHT COMES AND STILL THE ANT MONSTERS WAIT PATIENTLY...
THEY WON'T CROSS THE LINE OF FIRE, BUT THEY WON'T GO AWAY EITHER! THEY SEEM TO KNOW WE CAN'T ESCAPE!
THOSE EYES! STARING OUT OF THE DARK! IF MORNING WOULD ONLY COME!

BUT WITH DAWN COMES A NEW DANGER..
I KNOW WHAT THEY'RE WAITING FOR, LORNA, WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF WOOD!
THIS IS THE LAST! WE C-CAN'T GET ANY MORE!
THEN...
PAT, A SHIP! OH, WE'RE SAVED! THEY MUST HAVE SEEN THE SMOKE FROM OUR FIRE! WE'VE BEATEN THOSE CREATURES!
BUT NOT YET...
THE SHIP! TURNING AWAY FROM THE ISLAND! THEY EXPECTED US TO BE ON THE BEACH! THEY MUST THINK THE ISLAND IS DESERTED AFTER ALL!
COME ON, THEN! LET'S GET TO THE BEACH!
HURRY! THE SHIP IS STILL IN SIGHT! IF WE CAN GET TO THE BEACH IN TIME, WE CAN GET THEIR ATTENTION!
STICK CLOSE TO ME AND USE THAT CLUB LIKE YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT, BECAUSE IT DOES!
BUT INSTANTLY THE FOUL MONSTERS SWARM OVER LORNA...
A'EEEEEE! HELP! TH-THEY'VE GOT ME!
SQURRRRR
THEY PULLED THE CLUB OUT OF MY HAND! EEEEE! MY L-LEGS! BITTEN SO I CAN'T STAND UP! PAT, D-DON'T LEAVE ME TO THEM! OHHHH!
I'M COMING, DARLING!
SQUEE-
SQURRRR-

YEEEEEEE THEY'RE EATING ME ALIVE! D-DON'T LET THEM! AAAAA-
I'M COMING, PAT! KEEP ON FIGHTING!
BUT...
YOU, BLOCKING ME OFF, KEEPING ME FROM GETTING TO LORNA! I'LL CLUB YOUR FIENDISH BRAINS OUT!
SQUEEEE-
FINALLY..
LORNA! GREAT SCOTT- WHERE IS SHE? N-NO! NOT UNDER THAT SQUIRMING HEAP! PLEASE DON'T LET LORNA BE IN THERE! PLEASE!
AND...
GAAA! IT- IT IS! ALL THAT'S LEFT OF MY W-WIFE! THOSE BRUTES PICKED HER BONES CLEAN IN A MINUTE!
NO LONGER DOES PAT TRY TO ESCAPE! HE TURNS, AND CLUB READY, FACES THE BLACK HORDE THAT CREEPS TOWARD HIM...
C'MON, YOU MURDERING CREATURES! YOU'LL GET ME, SURE, BUT I'LL MAKE JELLY OUT OF SOME OF YOU FIRST!
IT DID NOT LAST VERY LONG! THE CREW OF THE DISTANT SHIP COULD NOT HEAR HIS CRIES AS THE LIVING FLESH WAS STRIPPED FROM HIS BONES! BUT IN THE END, BY SOME STRANGE CHANCE, THE ANTS DRAGGED THE SKELETONS TOGETHER AND LEFT THEM IN DEATH AS THEY HAD BEEN IN LIFE!
PERHAPS THEY KNEW!
THE END

WELCOME ONCE MORE TO MY CRYPT OF SUPERSTITION! ...DONT SNICKER!--THESE ARE THE BELIEFS OF PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME!
RING AGAINST EVIL!
BACK IN THE MIDDLE AGES, IT WAS BELIEVED THAT IF YOU WORE A RUBY RING, IT WOULD PROTECT YOU AGAINST EVIL! ...UH HUH...NOW TELL ME A TRUE STORY!
IN THE WOTJOBALUK TRIBE, IN AUSTRALIA, IT IS BELIEVED, IF A BAT IS KILLED, IT WILL ALSO SHORTEN THE KILLERS LIFE! ...WANT TO GO BAT HUNTING--HMMM?
IF...YOU PICK MARIGOLDS IN A GRAVEYARD, IT WILL DRIVE YOU TO DRINK! AW, GO ON, BE A VAMPIRE--ORDER A BLOODY-MARY!

Superstitions

O.H. NOVELLE